

A WORKING WOMAN'S TRIP ABROAD

By ELISE H. LAMPE

PERHAPS few of the nurses know of a society in Europe whose work is very similar to that of the Young Women's Christian Association in this country. This society has branches in every city and town in Europe, but does not bear the same name everywhere: in Bremen it is called *Marthaheim*, in Weimar *Paulinenslift*, in Paris *Maison Hospitalière* (in the latter city are many homes for the different classes of self-supporting women); they are found everywhere,—from Russia to Germany, from Asia to Scotland.

Two years ago, while travelling in Germany with my mother, I first learned of these homes, and we tried them with the happiest result, which now prompts me to tell of them, so that those of my colleagues who have longed for a European trip may be enabled to go for a very small sum of money by living in these homes.

A kind friend gave me a small *pink-covered* book, which contains the addresses of all the homes in Europe. The *pink* cover of the book is very significant; for any young woman travelling alone carrying one of these books in her hand is taken care of by the railroad officials in Germany, and in very large cities, such as Berlin, Hamburg, or Bremen, a woman who wears a white band with a pink cross on it around her left arm is on the lookout for every woman carrying the pink book. This woman helps the stranger with her luggage at the station, but on going out upon the street she removes the band about her arm and conducts her personally to the home, where she is received in the kindest manner by the *Frau Oberin* (matron), who takes her upstairs to a clean little room usually looking out upon a quiet garden. The matron is, of course, a busy woman, but all those whom I had the good fortune to meet were each ideal in her way and just the right person for the place.

From the time one enters the home to the day of leaving it one is treated as an honored guest. These homes are all more or less training-schools for domestics under the patronage of a woman, a lady of title, after whom these homes are named. A few rooms in each home are reserved *für durchreisende Damen* (ladies travelling through the city) in order that the pupils in training may learn practically how to care for a guest. And oh, the comfort of it! But perhaps I can convey more by giving a few of my experiences while a guest in the various homes.

The *Elisabeth Heim* is in Dessau, where we were received with the kindest hospitality and made thoroughly comfortable. There were no

rules to conform to. Our boots were blackened and dresses brushed, and for bathing we had plenty of hot water. In the morning a nice breakfast was waiting for us in the matron's sitting-room, with the best china and an embroidered cosey over the coffee-pot. The midday meal we took with the rest of the household. Supper we had at our own time in the sitting-room. We remained two nights and three days, and our bill was less than two dollars for my mother and myself. The matron asked us not to fee anyone, but if we wished to contribute to the fund for aiding and securing places for unemployed girls we would find a brass contribution-box in the hall.

Dresden has a *Lehrerinnenheim*, where I found trained nurses were accepted, and in this case I had the novel experience of being my mother's chaperon. The only rule to conform with in this home was to be strictly on time for meals; if out after ten P.M., a fine of two and a half cents per person to the concierge. For board and lodging, forty-five cents a day per person.

Weimar was so pleasant we wanted to remain indefinitely. We had a bedroom with two single beds and a sitting-room adjoining it, where breakfast was served to us. Dinner was served in an arbor in the garden, the matron and other guests partaking of it. Afternoon coffee we took there also, and one afternoon a cherry-cake was baked in our honor, which was a great treat. Here we paid seventy-five cents a day for board and lodging per person.

In September I left my mother in Germany and returned to this country. Arriving at the station in Bremen, I went up to the woman with the white band around her arm, who stood in a conspicuous place, and made my wants known to her. It seemed from the first moment as though I had met an old friend. She helped me with my luggage, went to the Lloyd office with me (in the street-cars she has the privilege of riding free), then gave me explicit directions to find the home, as she had to wait for the next train. At the home I was the only guest and was made very comfortable. The supper was served in the matron's sitting-room, but as she was too busy to join me, I found several interesting books on the table near my plate. The next morning Frau Walter, the kind woman who patiently stands in a draughty station to meet and help women travelling alone, went with me to the train, secured my seat, put my things on the rack, and waited till the train started. This was a strange contrast to my former experiences in Bremen,—a small, ill-ventilated room in a noisy hotel, with the porter too busy to attend to one's luggage, and a hurried, cold breakfast on the morning of departure of steamer, with a large bill in addition.

The railroad system in Europe is not perfect, but accommodates

itself to all classes,—but one has to learn and understand it. One can travel luxuriously first or second class, giving little thought to the matter of economy, but the tourist who wants to see much and has but little money to spend must plan and think. It is well, therefore, to have a definite idea about the places to be visited, and to be guided by the time and money at one's disposal.

If the traveller intends to visit Germany, Switzerland, Italy, etc., it is well to make out a list of the cities and towns to be visited—systematically, of course, on a large sheet of paper, clearly written. On arriving in Bremen or Hamburg, inquire of the inspector at the station for the office of the Rundreise Billet. In twenty-four hours a book of tickets for the round trip of forty-five or sixty days will be ready for you. Only hand luggage is allowed on these cheap tickets, but a trunk can be sent ahead by freight. In Germany and England one can travel third class very well, and for the other countries second-class tickets are joined on if desired.

LIFE'S HARMONY

THEY tell me that in Pisa's old cathedral
All noises harsh and loud—
Grating of ponderous doors, shrill tones,
The tramping and murmurs of the crowd—
Are caught up, softened, harmonized, and blended
Within the lofty dome,
Then echoed back in one great wave of music
Sweet as the dream of home.
So all the harsh notes in life's mingled music—
The burden and the woe,
The stroke that almost snaps the quivering heart-strings,
The loss that grieves us so—
In heaven's o'er-arching dome of perfect wisdom,
Power, and love, shall be
Gathered and blended in divinest marvel
Of matchless melody.

—M. C. UPTON.